



August 17, 2022

Mayor Sandy Shantz
24 Church Street West
P.O. Box 158
Elmira, Ontario N3B 2Z6

Re: Progress Rainbow Crosswalk – Town of Elmira

Dear Mayor Shantz,

The Canadian Mental Health Association Waterloo Wellington submits this letter in support of the petition to create a Progress Rainbow Crosswalk for the town of Elmira. This support is also endorsed by our CMHA WW JEDI (Justice Equity Diversity and Inclusion) Committee.

2SLGBTQI+ people are as diverse as the general Canadian population in their experiences of mental health and well-being but they face higher risks for some mental health issues due to the effects of discrimination and the social determinants of health.

Additional factors that may impact mental health and well-being for 2SLGBTQI+ people include the process of “coming out” (sharing one’s 2SLGBTQI+ identity with others), gender transition, internalized oppression, isolation and alienation and loss of family or social supports. Alongside homophobia or transphobia, 2SLGBTQI+ people may also experience other forms of marginalization – such as racism, sexism, poverty or other factors – that negatively impact on mental health.

As an organization, we believe in creating welcoming spaces for all. Rainbow crosswalks are a visual representation to members of vulnerable populations that let them know they are in a safe, welcoming space. The crosswalk also reminds 2SLGBTQI+ individuals that their community supports them as they move forward on their life’s journey.

Thank you for considering this important petition.

Sincerely,

Helen Fishburn, MSW
Chief Executive Officer
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